



SUCCESS STORY

Automation Boosts Courts' Performance

More efficient process is part of effort to improve access to justice system

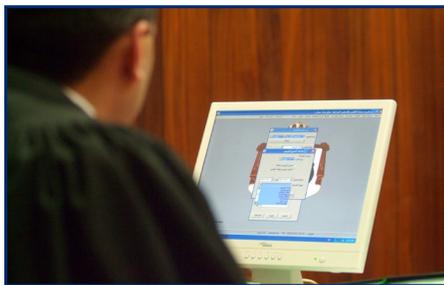


Photo: USAID Rule of Law Project

A USAID-supported court automation system enables chief judges to generate monthly court statistics that help them manage their courts within a matter of only minutes now, instead of days.

“Preparing 20 notifications used to take up to two hours. Now it requires only one hour.” said Ni’mat Al Zubaidi, a Jordan court registry clerk

“Accuracy” and “expediency” are the benefits that the court staff in the northern Jordanian city of Jerash name in using a computerized case processing software developed with USAID funding. “The new system has improved the speed and precision of doing the work. Preparing 20 notifications used to take up to two hours. Now it requires only one hour,” said Ni’mat Al Zubaidi, a clerk working at the court’s registry office.

Since 2005, USAID has operated an initiative to help Jordan’s judiciary automate national courts and thereby make them more efficient.

Through cooperation with the Ministry of Justice, USAID experts analyzed how work was done in court offices, and then recommended new processes that incorporate automation technology and allow the work to be done faster, more accurately and more transparently. Facility renovations and IT infrastructure upgrades were often necessary to accommodate the new working patterns, as was extensive training for judges and court staff alike.

The project was launched in the courts of Jordan’s capital, Amman, but USAID’s goal is to bring automation to all courts nationwide. The effects of this transition from manual to automated procedures can be witnessed in each of these courts.

Basima Al Nawasrah, a full-time programmer working at the court, describes the application as “user-friendly.” According to her, the program also helps clerks keep accurate data, respond quickly to case inquiries, search for and modify case information, and ensure that data entry is complete.

Chief Judge Muhammed Ali Al Za’arir is ensuring full use of the new system. He is particularly pleased with the speed of generating monthly court statistics that help him manage his court. They are now but a “few clicks away,” he said; before, they used to take three or four days to generate. Now he looks toward a day when Jordan’s courts are paperless.